

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 10, 2006. Claims 1, 3-12, 14-27, 29-35, 38, 40, and 43 are presented for examination. Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 12, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 32, 38, and 40 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Claim 28 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 1, 7, 12, 18, 23, 24, 27, 32, 38, and 40 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 7-12, and 18-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,687,742 (*Iwazaki*); Claims 3-6 and 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious from *Iwazaki* in view of U.S. Patent 6,327,046 (*Miyamoto*); Claims 27-32, 34, 35, 38, 40, and 43 were rejected as being obvious from U.S. Patent 6,396,848 (*Ohta*) in view of U.S. Patent 6,650,440 (*Wing*); and Claim 33 was rejected as being obvious from *Ohta* in view of U.S. Patent 6,301,016 (*Matsueda*).

As is described in the specification, Applicants have provided an approach to providing the sender of an E-mail with detailed confirmation about the success of an E-mail transmission. For example, if a mail includes an attached image file, the sender can be provided with confirmation not only that the mail itself was received, but also that the attached file was received successfully,

More specifically, Claim 1 is directed to an image communicating apparatus which is connected to a network capable of performing E-mail communication and has an E-mail communicating function. The apparatus includes an E-mail transmitting unit, an E-mail receiving unit, a requesting unit, a communication managing unit, and a judgment unit. The E-mail transmitting unit sends E-mail data accompanied by an image file. The

E-mail receiving unit receives E-mail data. The requesting unit selectively adds information for requesting a message disposition notification to the E-mail data to be sent to a receiver by the E-mail transmitting unit. The communication managing unit manages transmission information of each of sent E-mail data. The judgment unit judges whether the E-mail data was successfully sent, based on the message disposition notification received by the E-mail receiving unit and responsive to the sent E-mail data to which the information for requesting the message disposition notification was added. The transmission information includes information showing a result of the sending of the E-mail data performed by the E-mail transmitting unit, and the communication managing unit updates the information showing the result of the sending of the E-mail data included in the transmission information, based on a judgment by the judgment unit.

Thus, the judgment unit judges whether the sending of the transmission information concerning the sent E-mail data succeeded, based on the message disposition notification (MDN) received by the E-mail receiving unit, the sent E-mail data requesting the MDN, and the communication managing unit updating the information showing the result of the sending of the E-mail data included in the transmission information, based on the judgment of the judgment unit.

Moreover, by virtue of the features of Claim 1, a user can easily know whether the sent E-mail which requested the MDN was correctly sent, by referring to the transmission information, that is, without reading the content of the MDN.

Iwazaki, as understood by Applicants, relates to a communication control method for an electronic mail system in which a plurality of electronic mail devices transmit and receive images in the form of electronic mail over a computer network such as

the Internet. At most, *Iwasaki* discusses that an MDN is received and that the processing result described in the MDN is recorded in the transmission history.

Applicants submit that nothing has been found in *Iwazaki* that would teach or suggest a judgment unit for judging whether the sending of the transmission information concerning the sent E-mail data succeeded, based on the message disposition notification (MDN) received by the E-mail receiving unit, the sent E-mail data requesting the MDN, and the communication managing unit updating the information showing the result of the sending of the E-mail data included in the transmission information, based on the judgment of the judgment unit.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is believed to be patentable over *Iwazaki*.

Independent Claims 12 and 23 are method and computer program claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

Claim 7 is directed to an image communicating apparatus which is connected to a network capable of performing E-mail communication and has an E-mail communicating function. The apparatus includes an E-mail receiving unit, a detecting unit, and a notifying unit. The E-mail receiving unit receives E-mail data accompanied by an image file, and the detecting unit detects control information which requests reply E-mail from the E-mail data received by the E-mail receiving unit. A notifying unit notifies that the E-mail data having the control information was received, based on the detection of the control information from the E-mail data by the detecting unit.

Thus, the notifying unit provides notification that the E-mail data having the control information was received, based on the detection of the control information from the E-mail data by the detecting unit.

Even if *Iwazaki* is deemed to show displaying header information including control information of the received E-mail along with the received E-mail, that does not suggest the notifying unit of Claim 7, and in particular, does not suggest notifying the user of the image communication apparatus that the E-mail having the control information was received, based on the detection of the control information from the E-mail.

Accordingly, Claim 7 is believed to be patentable over *Iwazaki*.

Independent Claims 18 and 24 are method and computer program claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 7, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 7.

Claim 27 is directed to an image communicating apparatus for sending and receiving image information through a communication network. The apparatus includes an E-mail unit, a memory unit, a communication management information forming unit, a judgment unit, an updating unit, and a communication management report output unit. The E-mail unit sends and receives E-mail via an E-mail server connected to the communication network, and the memory unit stores communication management information of the E-mail. The communication management information forming unit forms communication management information of the sent E-mail and stores the communication management information into the memory unit, each time the E-mail is sent by the E-mail unit. The judgment unit judges whether the sending of the E-mail succeeded, based on a delivery status notification for the sent E-mail from the E-mail

server. The updating unit updates information showing a transmission result of the sent E-mail included in the communication management information of the sent E-mail, based on a judgment result by the judgment unit. The communication management report output unit outputs a communication management report indicative of the communication management information stored in the memory unit.

By virtue of the features of Claim 27, the judgment unit judges whether the sending of the E-mail succeeded, based on a delivery status notification for the sent E-mail from the E-mail server, and the updating unit updates information showing a transmission result of the sent E-mail included in the communication management information of the sent E-mail, based on a judgment result by the judgment unit.

Ohta, as understood by Applicants, relates to an apparatus and method of allowing a user to browse the history of relay transmission on a data terminal. *Ohta* discusses that, in a case where a network facsimile apparatus transmits an E-mail, the relevant apparatus first transmits the E-mail to the server 3 (see Fig. 1), that is, the E-mail is transmitted to the desired destination through the server 3. However, since *Ohta* does not disclose that the server 3 returns a DSN with respect to the relevant transmitted E-mail to the network facsimile apparatus, it is impossible to update the result of the DSN to the transmission result shown in Fig. 7. Although Fig. 7 of *Ohta* apparently shows that the transmission result (OK or NG) is marked, this is merely an example of the transmission result in a so-called G3 facsimile, that is, this does not teach or suggest the transmission result by an E-mail as in Claim 27.

Moreover, even if Fig. 7 of *Ohta* were deemed to show a transmission result of an E-mail, Applicants submit that such a transmission result (OK or NG) would merely

be equivalent to the result between the network facsimile apparatus and the server 3.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that *Ohta* does not have any constitution corresponding to the updating unit of Claim 27.

Wing, as understood by Applicants, relates to a communication system for transmission of FAX information using an E-mail message from a sending FAX device to a receiving FAX device where DSNs are received including four types of responses.

Nothing in *Ohta* and *Wing*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any), would teach or suggest judging whether the sending of the E-mail succeeded, based on a delivery status notification for the sent E-mail from the E-mail server, and updating information showing a transmission result of the sent E-mail included in the communication management information of the sent E-mail, based on a judgment result.

Accordingly, Claim 27 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Ohta* and *Wing*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any).

Independent Claims 38 and 40 are method and computer program claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 27, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 27.

Claim 32 is directed to an image communicating apparatus for sending and receiving image information through a communication network. The apparatus includes an E-mail unit, an analyzing unit, and a notification unit. The E-mail unit sends and receives E-mail via an E-mail server connected to the communication network. The analyzing unit, analyzes contents of the received delivery status notification, when a delivery status notification returned from the E-mail server in response to the E-mail transmitted by the

E-mail unit is received. The notifying unit, in response to a result of an analysis of the received delivery status notification by the analyzing unit indicating that the sent E-mail was not received, notifies a user of the image communication apparatus that the sent E-mail was not received.

By virtue of the features of Claim 32, in response to a result of an analysis of the received delivery status notification by the analyzing unit indicating that the sent E-mail was not received, a user of the image communication apparatus is notified that the sent E-mail was not received.

As explained above in connection with Claim 27, Applicants submit that *Ohta* and *Wing*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any), would teach or suggest the claimed notification.

Accordingly, Claim 32 is believed to be clearly allowable over *Ohta* and *Wing*, whether taken either separately or in any permissible combination (if any).

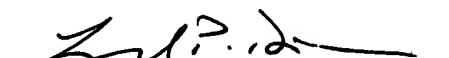
A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

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